

ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH,
FOR THE YEAR 1920.

TO THE URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL FOR THE
BOROUGH OF NEW ROMNEY.

GENTLEMEN,

The Population (Census 1901) was 1328 and in 1911, 1333. Estimated by the Registrar General at 1446 for 1920.

The Borough of New Romney covers a space of 1351 acres, 37 acres of which is water. The inhabited parts consist of the town of New Romney and the seaside suburb of Littlestone, the former containing 221 houses, and the latter 100.

The town of New Romney proper is situate on a bank some 10ft. above meantime level; many of the houses are old, but are mostly in fair repair.

The district of Littlestone is situate on low lying flats between the old town and the sea. The land being below the level of high tide is drained by means of sewers, which discharge through sluices at low tide. Up to a few years ago there was a large bay, known as Romney Hoy, into which a considerable amount of water was discharged. The sea has been excluded from this, and a large part of the area reclaimed, but sufficient provision for the drainage of the area behind does not appear to me to have been made, causing increased wetness in the low lying parts of the level. The houses which number some 100 are all comparatively new, and mostly in good repair.

The occupations of the people are chiefly agricultural, fishing, and the reception of visitors; the only manufactory in the town being a saw and wood-working mill

The nearest hospitals are Folkestone and Ashford, each 14 miles away, which are largely used for accidents and operations, and acute medical cases.

There is no home for sick persons, or for maternity cases in the district except the Workhouse. As a result better class working people, who cannot obtain nursing at home, are forced into the Workhouse Infirmary, even though they are not without means.

The Borough is supplied with water by the Littlestone Water Company who obtain their water from shallow wells on Dungeness Beach. The water is of excellent quality. The service is constant. The water is analysed twice a year.

COUNTY OF KENT.

F. W. F. ARNAUD, F.I.C.,
Public Analyst and Official,
Agricultural Analyst.
Telephone No. 183, Maidstone.

COUNTY ANALYST'S LABORATORY,
SESSIONS HOUSE,
MAIDSTONE,
17th November, 1920.

TO DR. B. MARTIN.

Description of Sample :—Lydd Town Supply, 9.-11.-20.

				Parts per 100,000
Total solid residue	...	...	...	14. 5
Chlorine	...	...	...	2. 4
Free Ammonia	...	...	...	0.001
Albuminoid Ammonia	...	...	...	0. 0
Nitrogen as Nitrates	...	...	...	0. 0
Oxygen absorbed $\frac{1}{4}$ hour at 80 F.			...	0.014
Oxygen absorbed 4 hours at 80 F.			...	0.024
Nitrites	...	...	...	Absent

Remarks :—This water is of excellent organic quality.

(Signed) F. W. F. ARNAUD,
Public Analyst for the County of Kent.

I called your attention to what I considered the insufficient protection of the catchment area of the Littlestone Water Company. Stonecrushing works have been erected quite near. The Railway line passes close alongside the pumping station. Trains with corridor carriages with lavatories run on the line and a considerable number of employees of the Railway Company pass up and down the line daily. Various footpaths and a cart track also pass either across Railway or close adjacent to the area. You communicated with Lydd on the matter and ultimately the County Medical Officer inspected the works and made certain suggestions which have been acted upon.

There are no rivers or running streams ; the only water courses being sewers and land drains. During the year complaint was made of the pollution of a sewer with trade refuse, you took action in the matter. In addition to the sewers almost every field has a pond in it, and nearly all, both sewers and ponds, are breeding places of Anophe-line Mosquitoes.

The sewage of the old town is drained into Cesspools, which are emptied by the Bexley Cart, the closets are mostly hand-flushed waterclosets, an increasing number however are being fitted with automatic flush.

Littlestone is provided with pipe drains with very little fall, so that pumping is necessary to dispose of the sewage. An attempt has been made to establish a sort of sewage farm but it was abandoned in the early stages of construction. At present the sewage flows from the pumps some 100 yards or so, and is then discharged into open land drains. This is a most unsatisfactory arrangement, and should be altered at once.

VITAL STATISTICS.

The population of the Borough is nearly stationary, only 5 being added between the last two censuses.

POOR LAW RELIEF.

The persons relieved under the Poor Law were

Outdoor 10	Medical 16
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There were registered during the year, 29 legitimate births and 3 illegitimate, giving a birth rate of 22.83 per 1000 of the population: there was one death of an infant under one year, giving a rate of 31.25 per 1000 persons born. There were 11 deaths giving a rate of 7.61 per 1000 on the estimated population.

The infectious diseases notified were, Influenza and Pneumonia 2, Erysipelas 2, Chickenpox 2, Pulmonary Tuberculosis 1. Three cases of Pulmonary Tuberculosis Certificate A were notified, all being visitors, with 1 death.

The incidence of infectious disease since 1905 has been as follows:—In September of that year, cases of Scarlatina occurred in a family which were not notified, and consequently we had six more families infected before we got the disease stamped out.

In February 1906, 3 cases of Scarlatina occurred in one family.

In September a visitor developed the disease.

In March 1907, a case occurred and later two children of the men who moved the case developed the disease.

In May one case occurred.

In 1908 a boy at school at Littlestone developed Diphtheria and one of the maids in the house took it.

In November a servant who had been on holiday developed diphtheria as soon as she returned to Romney.

In 1909, 2 cases of diphtheria occurred in one family.

In August 1911 two cases of diphtheria occurred. One was not taken to hospital and I understand the diagnosis was questioned by the medical man who saw the case later; the patient was a school teacher, and we have no information as to what precautions were taken with regard to disinfection.

In December 1911 and January 1912, two cases of Scarlatina in two families.

In August 1914, two cases of Diphtheria in children in two families.

In October, 1 case of Scarlatina, 1 in December, probably infected by the last patient who developed catarrh after he returned home, and one case at the end of the month.

In 1915, a case of Cerebro Spinal Meningitis in a soldier.

In March, three cases of Scarlatina in one family.

In June, one case.

In November, one Scarlatina and one Diphtheria.

In 1916, two cases of Diphtheria in one family.

In April 1916, I took swabs from all the children and found 28 were carriers of the Diphtheria Bacillus, all these except one, who was removed from the town, were taken to the isolation hospital and kept there till swabs had been taken in each case which did not show the germ.

Only two cases of Diphtheria have occurred since in the town, and both were infected before coming to New Romney.

In 1916, one case of Enteric fever admitted from the Workhouse, the man was from Lydd.

In 1917 October, a case of Enteric from the Workhouse, a nurse,

In 1919, two cases of Scarletina from one house.

A number of cases of Influenza were admitted to the hospital during the epidemic in 1918.

These figures show how useful hospital isolation is in such a place as this and how effectively it has been used.

Small pox. The Medical Officer of Health has not been asked to perform any vaccinations or re-vaccinations under the Regulations of 1917.

There has been no puerperal fever notified during the year.

SANITARY ADMINISTRATION.

The staff consists of the Medical Officer of Health who is also Medical Officer of Health for the Rural District of Romney Marsh, Medical Officer to the Isolation Hospital, and Medical Inspector of school children. He is not in general practice. And one Sanitary Inspector who is also Surveyor of Roads. There is one Hospital available for Infectious Disease with 12 beds in 4 wards, and one for Small Pox with 12 beds in 2 wards.

Bacteriological examinations are made by the County.

Approximate number of w.c's. into drainage system	118
W.C's. into Cesspools	198
Earth Closet	1
Pail Closets	0
Privies	4

ASHBINS.

Number of Houses provided with proper bins, with covers	62
“ “ “ “ “ unfit bins	231
“ “ “ “ “ fixed Receptacles ...	1
Number of Premises visited through the year ...	190
Defects or Nuisances discovered	5
Number of Notices served—Statutory 3 Informal	2
result Nuisance abated 5	

DRAINAGE.

Number of Houses on Drain	86
“ “ Cesspools, Sealed :	62
“ “ “ Doubtful and Unsealed :	83
Inspection of Dairies : 3 Monthly. Cowsheds : Monthly.	
Bakehouses : half-yearly. Slaughter houses ; 2 biweekly.	
Unsound Food : 2 cases. Inspection at Slaughter : Periodical.	
Factories and Workshops Inspected, 7. All found satisfactory.	

HOUSING.

Total Number of Houses	321
Number for Working Classes	247
New Houses for Working Classes	1
Population	1446
Shortage of Houses	16

Local Authority has a scheme in hand to meet this shortage.

OVERCROWDING.

There has been a little overcrowding, but this cannot be remedied until new houses are erected.

FITNESS OF HOUSES.

Number of such houses which are considered to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for habitation. 0

UNHEALTHY AREAS.

No areas have been represented as unhealthy.

BYE-LAWS.

The Council have already adopted Building Bye-Laws. There is no need for revision of the existing Bye-Laws.

HOUSING AND TOWN PLANNING ACT.

Number of Houses Inspected	...	...	...	24
Number of Houses Inspected under and for the purpose of Section 17	...	...	...	24
Number of Houses which were considered to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for habitation	...	...	...	0
Number of Houses of which representation was made to the Local Authority with a view to making closing orders	...	...	...	0
Number of Houses in respect of which closing orders were made	...	...	...	0
Number of Houses which after the making of closing orders were made fit for occupation	...	...	...	0
Number of Houses on which orders were made for the remedying of minor defects.	...	...	...	0

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

HENRY HICK.